

REMARKS:

Claims 1-12, 15-29 and 32-63 are presented for examination, with claims 1-3, 5, 7-10, 15, 18-21, 24-26, 29, 32, 33, 36-41, 44, 45 and 51 having been amended hereby and claims 13, 14, 30 and 31 having been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer.

Regarding the Examiner's indication on page 2 of the above-mentioned Office Action that the "oath or declaration is defective", applicants respectfully submit that the originally filed declaration is, in fact, in proper form.

More particularly, it is respectfully submitted that the originally filed declaration identified the mailing or post office address of each inventor.

In this regard, applicants submit herewith as Exhibit "A" a copy of the originally filed declaration showing such indication of each inventor's address.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the objection to the claims because of the informalities noted by the Examiner.

More particularly, claim 45 has been amended at line 15 as suggested by the examiner (in addition, claim 45 has been amended in a similar manner further into the claim).

Of note, it is believed that the objection to claims 46-63 was based solely on the objection to claim 45. Since claim 45 has been amended as described above, it is respectfully submitted that the objection to claims 46-63 has been rendered moot.

Of further note, it is respectfully submitted that the cancellation of claims 13 and 14 has rendered their objection moot.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the objection to the claims because of the informalities noted by the Examiner has been overcome.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 23, 24, 32, 36 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,428,578 ("White '578").

To begin with, it is respectfully submitted that applicants do not necessarily concur with the Examiner in the Examiner's analysis of the claims of the present application and the White '578 disclosure.

Nevertheless, in order to expedite prosecution of the application, the claims have been amended such that each of claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 23, 24, 32, 36 and 37 now recites (either directly or via dependency on a parent claim) subject matter which the Examiner has indicated as allowable.

More particularly, claim 1 has been amended hereby to recite the subject matter of cancelled claims 13 and 14 (of note, claim 14 had depended from claim 1 through claim 13).

Likewise, claim 24 has been amended hereby to recite the subject matter of cancelled claims 30 and 31 (of note, claim 31 had depended from claim 24 through claim 30).

Further, each of claims 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 now depends, directly or indirectly, from claim 2 (which is now in independent form and which had been indicated by the Examiner as reciting allowable subject matter).

Further still, each of claims 32, 36 and 37 now depends, directly or indirectly, from claim 25 (which is now in independent form and which had been indicated by the Examiner as reciting allowable subject matter).

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 23, 24, 32, 36 and 37 as being anticipated by White '578 has been overcome.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 9, 18, 20, 29, 39 and 44 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over White '578.

Again, it is respectfully submitted that applicants do not necessarily concur with the Examiner in the Examiner's analysis of the claims of the present application and the White '578 disclosure.

Nevertheless, in order to expedite prosecution of the application, the claims have been amended such that each of claims 9, 18, 20, 29, 39 and 44 now recites (either directly or via dependency on a parent claim) subject matter which the Examiner has indicated as allowable.

More particularly, claims 9, 18 and 20 now depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 2 (which is now in independent form and which had been indicated by the Examiner as reciting allowable subject matter).

Likewise, claims 29, 39 and 44 now depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 25 (which is now in independent form and which had been indicated by the Examiner as reciting allowable subject matter).

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 9, 18, 20, 29, 39 and 44 as being unpatentable over White '578 has been overcome.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of claims 6, 19, 38 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over White '578 in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,902,340 ("White '340").

Again, it is respectfully submitted that applicants do not necessarily concur with the Examiner in the Examiner's analysis of the claims of the present application and the White '578 and White '340

disclosures.

Nevertheless, in order to expedite prosecution of the application, the claims have been amended such that each of claims 6, 19, 38 and 40 now recites (either directly or via dependency on a parent claim) subject matter which the Examiner has indicated as allowable.

More particularly, claims 6 and 19 now depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 2 (which is now in independent form and which had been indicated by the Examiner as reciting allowable subject matter).

Likewise, claims 38 and 40 now depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 25 (which is now in independent form and which had been indicated by the Examiner as reciting allowable subject matter).

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 6, 19, 38 and 40 as being unpatentable over White '578 in view of White '340 has been overcome.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that each objection and rejection raised by the Examiner in the July 11, 2003 Office Action has been overcome and that the above-identified application is now in condition for allowance.

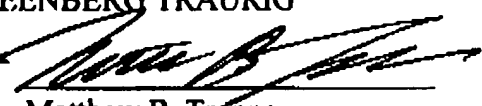
Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

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